

REMARKS:

I. Introduction

In the Office Action mailed on July 24, 2007, the Examiner rejected claims 1 to 26. The present amendment cancels claims 1 to 11, 15 and 21, amends claims 12, 13, 16, 20, and 22 to 24, and adds no new claims. Accordingly, claims 12 to 14, 16 to 20, and 22 to 26 are now pending in this application.

II. Claim Rejections Based on 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejected claims 13, 16 and 23 under 35. U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 13, 16, and 23 have been amended to clarify the language identified by the examiner. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

III. Claim Rejections Based on 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

(a) The Examiner rejected claims 1 to 10, 12 to 14, 16 to 22, and 24 to 26 under 35. U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Clement (US 5,197,968).

Claims 1 to 10 and 21 have been cancelled without prejudice as to pursuing the subject matter of the same through a continuing application. Independent claim 12, and claims dependent therefrom, are allowable because claim 12 has been amended to include the subject matter of prior dependent claim 15 which was indicated to contain allowable subject matter. Independent claims 20 and 24 have also been amended to include the subject matter of prior dependent claim 15. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

(b) The Examiner rejected claims 1 to 8, 11, 12, 14, and 16 to 22 under 35. U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Avellanet (US 6,264,664).

Claims 1 to 8, 11 and 21 have been cancelled without prejudice as to pursuing the subject matter of the same through a continuing application. Independent claim 12, and claims dependent therefrom, are allowable because claim 12 has been amended to include the subject matter of prior dependent claim 15 which was indicated to contain allowable subject matter. Independent claim 20 has also been amended to include the subject matter of prior dependent claim 15. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

(c) The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 5 to 10 under 35. U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Narayan (US 5,176,688).

Claims 1, 3, and 5 to 10 have been cancelled without prejudice as to pursuing the subject matter of the same through a continuing application. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

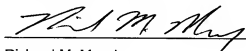
IV. Allowable Subject Matter

The examiner objected to claims 15 and 23 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but indicated they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Independent claim 12 has been amended to include the subject matter of dependent claim 15. There were no intervening claims. Claim 15 has been cancelled. Claim 23 has been rewritten into independent form to include all of the limitations of independent claim 12. There were no intervening claims. An indication of allowance is requested.

V. CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is found that the present amendment does not place the application in a condition for allowance, Applicant's undersigned attorney requests that the Examiner initiate a telephone interview to expedite prosecution of the application. If there are any fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 50-3915.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard M. Mescher
Reg. No. 38,242

PORTER, WRIGHT, MORRIS & ARTHUR LLP
41 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
(614) 227-2026
Fax: (614) 227-2100

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